The PULPIT

A Periodical of Contemporary Preaching

SEPTEMBER 1944

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Contributed by Readers of THE PULPIT

The War Creates New Need for Bibles

Out of this war has grown a new feature of Bible distribution, unknown at any time before in the world's history. Under the leadership of the American Bible Society, Testaments or Gospels and Psalms are now a part of the standard equipment of the lifeboats and life-rafts of our merchant marine, of our vessels and aircraft, and of our flying fortresses. A chaplain recently asked one of the men who were packing life-rafts which go to our medium bombers if he could wait a day or two for the arrival of Testaments packaged in water-proof jackets. He replied: "Chaplain, I have to. I have been ordered not to pack these rafts until a New Testament goes in each one of them." More than 40,000 Testaments or Gospels and Psalms have been tucked away in the compartments of lifeboats and rafts and many thousands more will doubtless be required. —*American Bible Society.*

The Bible and Postwar Reconstruction

From London comes the report that because of a paper shortage in Britain, the British Foreign Bible Society, along with the American Bible Society, will attempt to meet the pressing need for Scriptures on the Continent by printing in Sweden large numbers of Bibles in various European languages, including French, Czechoslovakian, Rumanian and Serbian. At the last annual meeting of the British Foreign Bible Society, it was reported that a great part of a special fund of $800,000 had already been earmarked for such Biblical reconstruction work in Europe.—*British Information Service.*

A Soldier Pays Tribute to Christian Missions

The other day I received a letter from one of the young men of my parish who has been serving in the South Pacific. Here is a significant excerpt:

"I am sure you will be interested in one phase of our last operation—not the battle, but the natives. At Kwajalien we found a race of intelligent Christian people; not a group of savages, as we expected. Our missionaries had done a wonderful job there, prior to the occupation by the Japanese. We found that 80 per cent of the Marshallese were devout Christians. That is a record civilized nations cannot equal . . . After ten years' domination by the Japanese, during which they were forced to burn any Christian literature they might have and were not allowed to worship their God (they were severely punished for doing so), their first request of us was for prayer and a few hymns. The Japanese had told these people that Christ had been abolished forever. When our chaplain approached them, quoting the Bible, they fell to their knees crying, 'Christ has returned.' When you witness such a scene, you realize what we are fighting for."—*Eldon W. Wenzel, Glen Avon Presbyterian Church, Duluth, Minn.*

Chiang Kai-shek on the Bible

"I have been a Christian for nearly ten years, and during that time I have been a constant reader of the Bible. Never before had this sacred book been so interesting to me as during my two weeks' captivity in Siam. This unfortunate affair took place all of a sudden and I found myself placed under detention without having a single earthly belonging. From my captors I asked but one thing— a copy of the Bible. In my solitude I had ample opportunity for reading and meditation. The greatness and love of Christ burst upon me with new inspiration, increasing my strength to struggle against evil, to overcome temptation and to uphold righteousness."

'God Waits'

Last Christmas the Patriarch of Russia sent this message to the people of Russia: "God sits in the corner, but waits." That sounds irreverent, but it is really a message of childlike hope and faith put in a way the Russian people can understand. The Russian peasant is used to waiting; he waits through the long cold winters, then through the rainy spring, before he can plant his seed; this Christian message told him that, although the heads of the Russian nation had cast out God, he was still there and patiently waiting.

An article in the *Reader's Digest* tells how religion has come back to Russia. The Patriarch Sergius is an old man (76); he has served three terms of imprisonment, but he is a man of wonderful faith. He rises every morning at seven, prays till nine, then drinks a cup of tea, reads his Bible and the newspapers, and then deals with church affairs. He it is who is largely responsible for keeping the Christian faith alive in Russia. In 1937 the Soviet government took a census and it was shown that after twenty years of persecution of the church, one-third of Russia's city population and two-thirds of its peasants were still Christians. What a wonderful story! The heads of Russia put God in a corner, but his people enshrined him in their hearts.—*The Christian Advocate, London.*

The Plumb-line Test

The name of Florence, Italy, in recent news dispatches reminds one of the unusual plumb-line test in the cathedral in that city. High up in the center of the cathedral is a lofty dome, and in one of its windows the builders fastened a small iron ring. On a certain day in June, at a certain hour when the sun reaches its zenith, sunbeams shine through that ring on a brass plate let into the marble floor beneath. And as long as the sunshine falls on that spot, at that hour, on that day, the cathedral is proved to be as upright as on the day when the builders finished their work. The light-line is the plumb-line.

There is still a more wonderful light-line at work in our hearts. Above us the light of Christ is shining. Down through the ring of his commandments the light falls on where we stand, and on what we are doing, and on what we are thinking; and if a responsive obedience flashes back an answer to that light, we may know that all is right. And not once a year only, not once a month, not once a certain day, but every day we may test ourselves to know if we are "keeping the commandments."—*Gordon W. Mattice, Westminster Church, Rochester, N. Y. (From "The Man With the Plumb-line" by Ernest Dowsett)*

The Greatness of Our God

Professor Shapley reports the discovery of 75,000 new galaxies to add to the 325,000 already known. He tells us the galaxy spotters will probably run the total to a million within a few years, and that the average galaxy contains more than a billion suns—plus, no doubt, planets, moons, comets and other minor accessories. Some of these new galaxies may be 100,000,000 light years from the earth!—*New York Times.*

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The Pulpit

CHARLES CLAYTON MORRISON, *Editor*

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When the Light Failed

BY JOSEPH R. SIZOO

Repent, do the first works; or else I will remove thy candlestick. Revelation 2:5.

IN HIS illuminating and penetrating treatise on the meaning of religion Tolstoy suggests that among all peoples, at certain periods of time, religion swerves from its original purpose, diverges more and more from that purpose, and finally petrifies into fixed forms until its influence becomes less and less. The result is that ever-growing minorities cease to believe in religion and the masses are no longer guided by it.

It is one of the sobering facts of human history that this tragic cycle occurs again and again. When religion comes it brings with it a great experience of God. But with the passing of time, the experience thins out into a mere tradition and in the end it evaporates into an inconvenience. Why is it that when God enters the human heart bringing it a sense of exaltation and devotion, gradually that devotion becomes a mere duty and the duty leads to disillusionment? The dawn comes, but it soon fades; the light breaks, but may go out. There is the possibility of losing the glow which God brings to the soul. We will always need the warning: "Do the first works, or else I will remove thy candlestick."

AN EARLY CHURCH THAT WITHERED

You come upon that tragic cycle early in the history of the Christian religion. A scant sixty years had passed since the ascension of our Lord when you meet this fatal experience. It happened at Ephesus, famed city of Asia Minor. It was rich, proud, intellectual and corrupt. Here the caravan trails ended and sailing ships dropped their anchors. It marked the crossroad of the world. The city reeked with idolatry. Revelry and debauchery were commonplace. Into that proud and sordid center one day Paul came to preach the good news of the Son of God and left behind him a small band of Christians, the most distinguished of whom were Aquila and Priscilla. Then came Apollos later and strengthened the little group. Afterward John made the building of the church in Ephesus his life work.

The church did not have an easy time of it in such a setting, but it was faithful and stood its ground. It had great zeal for doctrine. It never reefed its sail in the matter of truth. That church spoke no mealy-mouthed words to its generation, and there was no stain upon its escutcheon. It was a band of people who had convictions and stood by them. They were able to give an account of the faith there was in them. As one reads the story of that church one cannot help but say, "I wonder what more can be expected of a Christian group?" One may well imagine the church at Ephesus saying, "What lack I yet?"

HOW THE LIGHT WENT OUT

And yet, something began to happen in that church. It did not come at once, it crept upon it imperceptibly, but surely. Something began to wither at its roots. You have a feeling that something was dying inside of it. It had purity of doctrine, but there was no great persistence in love. It had a sound creed, but it was so utterly lacking in compassion. The fault was not that the church disagreed with its generation, but that it was so disagreeable about it. Its orthodoxy was wrapped up in dry ice. The loyalty of its members was bundled in bigotry. Its constancy of belief was shot through with intolerance. There came a time when religion became an argument and not a testimony; a debate but not a personal witness. It was severely orthodox, but terribly forbidding. While it went about hurling anathemas at the world it ceased to have influence. And the same Christ who came to a bend in the road and wept over the city saying, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, hadst thou but known the things which belong to peace," looked down from heavenly battlements and wept once again saying: "Repent, go back, or else I will remove thy candlestick." So the story ends with a question mark and exclamation point, blistered over with tears. A church like that has no future. Religion began as a devotion, then became a duty and in the end was a disillusionment. How that other warning of Jesus burns, "If the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness."

It is a solemn and sobering fact that the fire may go out and that the light may fail. You see what happens when the disciple separates himself from Christ. It is possible to be so concerned about defending him that we have no time or energy left to follow him. That has often happened in the unfolding story of the Christian church. Listen to what one of the leaders of the church wrote in 306: "Since the Niceaen Creed we have done nothing but write creeds. We fight about words and contend over statements. We take advantage of ambiguity and prepare anathemas, yet there is scarcely a man who belongs to God." It will always be a sobering truth that at certain periods religion swerves from its original pur-

pose and petrifies into fixed and heartless forms having no influence.

DARKNESS COMES TO RUSSIA

How contemporary all that is one need hardly suggest. You have a grim reminder of that in Russia. That was a dark day for mankind when the Goths and Visigoths under Alaric and two hundred years later when the Huns under Attila swept over Europe turning its civilization inside out and upside down. They stormed even the very gates of Rome. But the fellowship of Jesus, unperturbed and unfaltering, carried the light into the darkness, crossed the Danube and with the conversion of Vladimir brought the Slavic people under the impact of the Son of God. That gospel changed the whole temper and tone of life. There was born in the hearts of those Slavic people a mysticism as deep as it was real. The church was made up of a winsome, pious company whose devotion and reverence must have gladdened his heart.

But with the passing of the centuries the tragic cycle began to work. There came a time when religion swerved from its original purpose and became petrified into fixed forms. Then an ever-increasing minority ceased to believe in it and the masses were no longer guided by it. To maintain its prestige and strength the church began to accommodate itself to the influences which could keep it in power. All manner of compromises crept into the church. It became identified with tyranny and it cast in its lot with czarism. It became one of the repressive forces of freedom, cutting itself off from the aspirations of people until the church, violent in its reaction, became an accomplice to the crime of exploitation. Then came the revolution in Russia and when communism determined to end once and forever that regime it began by destroying its most potent and effective weapon, the church.

I am perfectly aware that that does not altogether explain the cruel and critical attitude of communism to Christianity. That antagonism rests upon three fundamental reasons, but always the first and foremost reason is the fact that reality had gone out of the church. Religion had become petrified into fixed, heartless forms and the masses were no longer guided by it. One wonders what would have happened if that revolution had met a better church with greater compassion and concern, free and disentangled from all compromising pressure groups. If the twentieth century church of Russia had been as the first century church one cannot help concluding that this whole tragic story of purging and persecution might have been different. When you read that story you seem to hear again the warning: "Repent, do the first works; or else I will remove thy candlestick."

JUDGMENT DAY IN GERMANY

You meet that same grim judgment in Germany. Next to St. Paul and St. Augustine there is perhaps no more moving or significant figure in the history of the Christian church than the humble priest who nailed his theses upon the door of his parish church in Wittenburg, Martin Luther. He brought in a new day for Christendom, shouting across the centuries, "The just shall live by faith again." His impassioned plea kindled a new hope. He brought to the Christian faith a new reality, warmth and depth.

But once again this dreadful cycle appears. Religion began to swerve from its original purpose, diverging from its supreme task until it became petrified into fixed forms, losing its influence. A growing minority ceased to believe in it and the masses were no longer guided by it. Then to maintain its power and prestige the church began to accommodate itself, casting in its lot with imperialism. Step by step it began to worship the monarchy, distrusting people. Later, it had nothing but contempt for the new republic. It was never sympathetic with Weimar. It became the tool of reaction and lost its social compassion. When the revolution came to that now dark country, determined to bring in a new day, the people began by destroying the strongest tool wielded by the old order, the church. The dreadful result of that decision we see all about us. Nazism has turned Europe into shambles, the cities of the continent into a slaughter house, bitterly strafing the Christian religion.

It is quite true that that does not explain all of the vindictiveness and hate which nazism has toward the Christian religion. I am aware of the fact that there are, here also, three fundamental reasons for that hate. But always in the forefront of that vindictiveness stands the simple fact that reality and warmth and depth had gone out of so much of the church as it swerved from its original purpose. One wonders again what would have happened if the church had stood in the forefront of the ground swell which demanded a better order and a better day. How different might be the dark story written today in letters of blood if the church of the twentieth century had been like the church of the first century! Once again the leaves of the Judgment Book unfold and the warning comes; "Repent, do the first works; or else I will remove thy candlestick."

IT CAN HAPPEN HERE!

That solemn warning we need, too, for it may happen here. Let us live with no pleasing illusion. God plays no favorites. That law works with an impartial judgment everywhere. By and large, the church has never been better organized; it has never been so orthodox; it has never been so certain of its doctrine. Its worship is attractive; its architecture is winsome; its music is appealing and its ritual makes an aesthetic appeal. And yet, many are wondering today if something has not gone out of its life. Some, at least, are fearful that it is withering at its roots and something is beginning to die inside of it. So often in a day of disillusionment when people grope for something somewhere to give them help and hope, they come to the church, shake their heads and pass on. They are afraid they have to go outside the church to find God.

It is possible for the church to become so petrified in form that reality goes out of it. We treat it so casually. It has ceased to be the biggest thing in our lives. The fires of faith are falling back into gray ash. In order to keep its power and prestige the church has all too often accommodated itself to all manner of pressure groups. When some political economist advances a new social theory which runs counter to the Christian religion, it is so easy for the church to suggest that some things to which it is committed had better be forgotten. When science comes with some new theory or conclusion we are so disposed to pare down our gospel. The peril of the church is that it shall forever accommodate itself to pressure groups and harmonize its gospel with some popular idea. It is so common to send up a trial balloon to find out which way the wind is blowing before we affirm our faith. The result of it is that many are no longer guided by it or to it. It is true one sees everywhere today a return to religion, but not a return to the church. Men are willing to confess that there is something in Christianity, but they are not sure that they want "churchianity." One wonders if the tragic cycle is not working once again: religion swerving from its original purpose, becoming petrified into forms until a growing minority ceases to believe in it and the masses are no longer guided by it.

Who among us can doubt that the supreme need for us all is to make essential once again what Christ made essential if we are to escape the judgment of the Lord? The church will have power again when it comes to obey God rather than man. We may well ponder what Paul wrote long ago: "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not love, I am but sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal."

IS OUR DEMOCRACY FAILING?

But while the peril of swerving from an original purpose is so grimly real in the realm of religion, it is equally apparent in every expression of modern life. There are signs of this same peril in the world of business and in the field of education and culture. No one will deny that it is grimly true in the realm of government. Believe me, democracy stands in breath-taking need of that warning. Look at our history. That was a great day when in the cabin of the Mayflower on November 21, 1620, a company of people called Pilgrims signed the Compact, "pledging solemnly in the presence of God to combine together for a better ordering of life and for the general good." That was the high purpose of the founders as they landed upon New England's broken coast and set up this government under God which we proudly call the American way of life. That was the torch they carried into the wilderness and it fired their faith.

Is it not true that for a long time now we have been in danger of swerving from that high purpose? We are witnessing the tragedy of a time when group is set against group, section against section, and when class consciousness is imperiling our unity. We seem to be baptized with prussic acid rather than with the love of one another. Groups and blocks and pressure areas, motivated by self-interest, are so disposed to exploit democracy for selfish ends until one wonders if a government of the people, by the people and for the people can do anything else but perish. There are disturbing factors in our national life, indeed in all democratic countries. Bureaucracy, sectionalism, pressure groups and class consciousness are imperiling us even in this day of war. We may well pause at this time of heart-searching to hear again: "Repent, go back; or else I will remove thy candlestick."

AS INDIVIDUALS, WE MUST REPENT!

Now all this has a bearing upon our own individual lives. It is always a danger to place the blame on society and governments and movements when, in reality, the burden of guilt is exceedingly personal. Here we are today. Our lives have been enriched by the memories of Christian homes. By the grace of God we have entered into the imperishable inheritance of godly parentage. We have come from homes and from communities where the Bible was an open book and where we learned to sing the sabbatic songs of God and home and heaven. Those memories we carried with us. It fired the flames of our faith and we held it as a torch guiding us along the road.

But if we told the truth and looked at ourselves as we are, we would see again the working of this tragic cycle as we are swerving from high purpose and accommodating ourselves to the spirit of the age. It is so easy today to make adjustments to what is popular or hold half-heartedly what was once a consuming urge. We frown upon the Ten Commandments and laugh at moral sanctions. But something happens to life when it is lived on that basis. To be sure, it does not appear at once or suddenly, but gradually the moral sanctions of the universe begin to express themselves. The stars grow dimmer and the flame flickers and the lights go out until we become like Samson who "wist not that the Lord had departed from him."

IN AN AGE OF FRUSTRATION

Behind so much of the bewilderment and frustration which haunt and grip people with a clammy hand, there is the working of this law. The leaves of the Judgment Book are unfolding and the impartial paymaster of the judgment is at work. Over the disillusionments which sear our souls there comes this ancient voice: "Repent, do the first works; or else I will remove thy candlestick." It is for this that I make my plea today. "He that hath an ear let him hear what the spirit saith unto the churches."

I have been thinking of the closing lines of David Copperfield which may well challenge us. "And now as I close my task, subduing my desire to linger yet, these faces fade away. But one face, shining on me like a heavenly light, by which I see all other objects, is above them and beyond them all. And that remains. So may I, when realities are melting from me, like the shadows which I now dismiss, still find Thee near me, pointing upward." God grant it for his name's sake!

If Anywhere, Then Everywhere

By Harold A. Bosley

Scripture: Psalm 139:1-18. John 17, selections.

THE Christian religion makes one claim which can always stand a little more explaining—the claim of universality, of being a world religion. Right off this distinguishes Christianity from several distinct and well known kinds of religion. It denies that Christianity is a culture religion, *i.e.*, that it stands or falls with any known pattern of culture. As a matter of fact, Christianity has made her way into levels of culture which vary all the way from crudest primitive to most cultured modern life. This claim denies, further, that Christianity is a racial religion, since Christians are found in every racial grouping in the world. It also denies that Christianity is a national religion, since its adherents are found in all nations. The currently popular notion that the fate and future of Christianity is somehow vitally bound up with the military victory of one group of nations over another is so much historical nonsense. This rise and fall of nations and civilizations is an old and familiar, though always tragic, experience in Christian history.

—*Photograph by Bachrach*

Christianity confronts all such limiting claims with the insistence that it is a world religion, a universal faith, which can make its home anywhere in the wide ranges of human life. It insists, finally, that its mission will not be completed until it has literally gone to the ends of the earth and sunk so deeply into human life and history that the whole world will be a Christian commonwealth.

To say that this claim is having rough sledding in the modern world is to put it mildly!

Many Christians are dodging or ignoring its meaning today. They find it easier to talk about "global" this and "global" that than it is to keep their loyalty linked to truly universal ideals and purposes. They find it much easier to seek security in some nearer-at-hand group like the United Nations, or our own nation, or our own church than it is to find security in terms of a world order and a world fellowship. They seem to prefer to believe that the "shape of things to come" is better prefigured in the event of a United Nations' victory and domination of the world than in the message and mission of the Christian church.

Many non-Christians—or paganized Christians, to be more exact—pour their severest criticisms on this claim of universality. The politest thing they ever say about it is that it is "irrational dogmatism." But, as their indignation mounts, the charge mounts too and becomes "dangerous intolerance." And finally, when their wrath soars to white heat, the claim is dubbed "spiritual totalitarianism" and likened to the Red Queen's chant, "Everyone's heads off but our own."

I am confident that our best reply to Christians who want to soft-pedal the claim and to non-Christians who ask us to repudiate it lies in stating as simply and as forcibly as possible what the claim has meant and continues to mean both to Christianity and to mankind. Let us begin by considering what the claim means and by examining the various criticisms now being made of it. Then let us inquire whether the claim is better regarded as the selfish, acquisitive thrust for power of one religious sect or as the hope of the world.

II

From the earliest days chronicled in our records the Christian faith has had her eyes fixed on world horizons. It could hardly have been otherwise when one sees and weighs the meaning of these four tremendous convictions which, from the beginning, have given form and life both to the Christian religion and to her claim of universality:

1. We believe in One God, One Creative Force, One Spiritual Power as the Creator and Sustainer of the universe. He alone is supreme; he only is worthy of the supreme loyalty of men.

2. We believe that his will is Truth; that his will for the world is the deepest truth, the final fact, about the world; that his will for life is the deepest truth, the ultimate fact, about life. In short, his will is the Absolute Truth of the universe.

3. We believe that man's clearest insight into God's will for human life is to be found in the life and teachings of Jesus Christ and the Christian tradition.

4. We believe that this gospel, involving as it does the welfare and eternal destiny of all men, should be shared with all men.

I submit that basic convictions like these require a world religion. God, Truth, Christ, Brotherhood—where in any of these tremendous ideas is there any place for division according to race or nation or class or petty ecclesiastical creeds? They are broad as the earth, high as the heavens, eternal as God himself.

An awareness of world mission is prefigured in Christ's final prayer with his disciples as recorded in the Gospel of John. He prays first for himself, then for his disciples, and finally for all Christians in all ages. Brooding over his entire prayer is the devout hope, "May they all be one." This is more than the structure of a truly Christian prayer—though it is undeniably that. It outlines the development of a truly Christian life. It may, nay it must, start with self, but it cannot stop with self. The line of movement in prayer and life alike is, must be, steadily outward from the center of self until it reaches the circumference of all mankind. Under God—and for the Christian no other ultimate perspective is possible—that is, must be, the logic of Christian thought,

the law of the Christian life. It is no accident that Matthew closes with this towering declaration of Jesus to his disciples: "Go ye therefore and teach all nations."

III

This claim of universality has proved to be one of the truly essential yet one of the most disturbing aspects of the Christian religion.

I say essential because the Christian religion could not have survived, let alone flourished, without it. Christians, from the beginning, have felt it their divinely appointed task to take the gospel to the ends of the earth. This sense of mission through divine commission yielded the sort of courage—or "holy boldness," to use our fathers' phrase—that built the church. It enabled Peter to confront the custodians of power—the ones who had put Jesus to death and Peter himself in prison, and upon his release had bade him keep silent about Jesus—and to say, "We must obey God rather than man." It enabled Martin Luther to walk into the council chamber, confront the embodiments of temporal and spiritual power in the Holy Roman empire, hear their last offer to forgive him if he would recant his heresies, yet to say, *"Hier stehe ich!"* "Here I stand! God helping me I can do no other!" And, at a still later date, it enabled John Wesley to write the opening page in a new and glorious chapter of Christian history. You will recall that Wesley's appeal to the common people outside the church was not welcomed by many of the comfortable people inside the church. Early in his ministry, when Wesley found the doors of the churches closing to him, he heard the taunt that he was a priest without a parish. He replied, "The world is my parish."

The permanent importance of such declarations is to be found not in the fact that they were said by someone at some time, but rather in this: they are memorable phrasings of the sense of assurance and confidence in God which underlies the entire Christian movement. It is this sense of assurance which has sent and continues to send Christian missionaries to the ends of the earth. And sometimes it alone keeps them and us at the task of proclaiming the gospel in our humble way.

Yet, having said all this, the Christian conscience cannot help being profoundly disturbed by what has happened when this claim of universality has been asserted in human history. To put it bluntly, it has been the prolific mother of intolerance. Inquisitions, heresy hunts, crusades, wars of religion and all other known manner of torture have been used in its service. Now, whatever else it may be, one thing is sure: intolerance is a poor symbol for a church which seeks to unify the whole world in a spirit of love and brotherhood. The problem we must finally face is whether we can maintain the claim of universality without having its positive quality of assurance finally destroyed by the negative one of intolerance.

Professor Jacques Barzun, in his provocative book *On Human Freedom,* suggests that, in principle, we can't do it. "And with any idea . . . it is our basic notion of its absolute truth that is our undoing," he writes. "If we believe in absolute truths, how can we help murdering one another as heretics?" he wants to know. He continues the argument to the effect that belief in absolute truth leads to an absolute church or an absolute state, both of which are utterly incompatible with democracy and freedom. He therefore pleads that all absolutists become relativists, that we give up the notion of absolute truth and be content with ideas that are "better" than the ones we have had before.

Many contemporaries are crying "Amen" to that sort of reasoning. They like to talk about the "different philosophies of life" and infer that we can make a selection from among them to suit our tastes—just as we do in hats and clothing. They seem to believe that we ought to go about selecting a "philosophy of life" with the same vague intensity which characterizes a lady in search of a hat! They talk about "one culture being as good as another so long as the people living in it are contented." In a day of crisis, they rise up to defend what they call "our way of life" against the threats of other ways of life *not because it is right and true* but merely because they like it; it happens to suit them.

This type of criticism and thought is so prevalent that many Christians have begun to doubt the validity of the claim of universality. But before we forsake it let us take due note of the fact that it is not peculiar to religion.

Natural science makes a similar claim. It will not let any theory rest until it has been lodged somewhere in the idea of the uniformity of nature. For the laws of nature, to which the scientist finally appeals in one way or another, are universal in scope and the truth of any theory is determined by its coherence with the known system of law and fact. Whoever heard of a physicist propounding "the American law of thermodynamics"? Or why didn't Charles Darwin call his famous formula "the English theory of natural selection"? To do this would be to introduce an irrelevant and entirely useless fact. Scientists assume the uniformity of natural law: let them once seriously begin to doubt it and the doors of their laboratories will close all over the world. The claim of universality is the bed-rock of scientific method and procedure.

The great political thinkers have usually asserted the claim of universality for their theories. When Marx and Engels wrote, "Workers of the world, unite," they were thrusting political theory toward universality. And so were the writers of the Declaration of Independence when they wrote: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness." Is it any wonder that the *Communist Manifesto* has had reverberations in every country in the world? Is it any wonder that this republic in its infancy did not have one friend among the monarchs of Europe who heard their doom pronounced in those majestic lines of the Declara-

tion? For, if these lines were true, then the day of the divine rights of kings was over not only here in America but wherever men heard and believed.

The plain fact seems to be this: you encounter the claim of universality wherever you find men addressing themselves to the great problems of knowledge, justice and equitable social relations. We honor it in these areas—and we do well. Why, then, should it be considered reprehensible when the Christian religion seeks to bring the whole world to that understanding of God which we find in Jesus Christ?

But, you ask, what about the danger of intolerance and persecution? How escape that? I am not sure we can. It is very real and very terrible. Absolute truth has frequently led and can easily lead to murderous consequences. The pale outline of the Inquisition is plainly discernible in every pronouncement which begins "There is but One God" or "There is but one anything else." The urge to secure conformity by means of coercion becomes almost uncontrollable if one has the power to implement the urge. That danger is every bit as real today as it has ever been, so far as I can tell. Are we sure the claim of universality is worth running that risk, you demand—and I don't blame you!

One of the most realistic reasons for running the risk is the fate of peoples who have tried to get along without any kind of absolute. It is true that when you make One God the measure of all things you are likely to develop an Inquisition. But it is just as true that when you make man the measure of all things you are certain to develop either an anarchic individualism on the one hand or a tyrannical collectivism on the other. What happened in fourth-century Greece—the Age of the Sophists—is a good, and I believe fair, illustration of what happens when men disown all absolutes.

That the Sophists were shrewd, brilliant and skeptical teachers no one can deny. They could and did sweep the Pantheon clean for most thoughtful Greeks and by so doing they made away with the folk-symbols of all moral and spiritual absolutes. The Sophists could and did do this. But one thing they could not do! They could not keep a hundred thousand Greeks from climbing onto the vacant pedestals and chanting: "My desires are my gods. I do what I please!" And a hundred thousand Greek did just that! Chaos invaded every area of life: thought, morals, politics and religion. To be sure, Socrates, Plato and Aristotle could and did demolish the philosophy of the Sophists but they could not check the infection which it had let loose in the life of Greece. One civil war followed another, one form of tyranny supplanted another until finally, almost mercifully, the power of imperial Rome put a final end to the agony of Greece.

So, dangerous as it is to believe in *One God whose will is truth,* it is at least equally dangerous to believe in no God—in which case *my will is truth.* The movement of thought is never from religion to irreligion, from belief in one God to belief in no god; it is always from one form of religion to another. If the object of religious devotion is not "the High and Holy One who inhabiteth eternity," it will be something dangerously less—sometimes nation, race or church, but usually man glorified beyond all historical recognition.

This fact, I say, the Christian faith has learned through bitter experience. It continues, therefore, its ancient claim of and thrust toward universality. It continues to talk in terms of the whole man, the whole society, the whole world. It seeks to awaken an awareness of divine unity and community by exalting the One God whose will is Truth and who stands before us supremely in Jesus Christ. Christianity can no more abandon its claim of universality than it can abandon its faith in One God. The two stand or fall together.

IV

This is no time for spiritual retrenchment; no time for weakly abandoning or hesitantly affirming the claim of universality as the hope of the world. For it is only as this claim is translated into fact that there comes into being a spiritual foundation for a world community. It alone can bring to birth in us a *oneness* greater and more imperative than our separateness. To put the matter sharply: the only secure foundation for the collective security we all desire is collective concern. That, obviously, cannot be brought into existence by any possible peace treaty or rearrangement of international power. It can come from nothing less than the awareness of *oneness* which is implicit in the Christian assurance that we are *one in God.*

In an earlier day the practical "man of affairs" could and did dismiss the phrase "a world fellowship" as a beautiful but visionary phrase. But now he is treating it with new respect. He is beginning to see that it is the least alarming alternative before our reeling world. For the urgent question which every man must face today is this: "What kind of world will you work for, live for, and if need be, die for? If not a world brotherhood, a world community, then what?"

For nearly 2,000 years now, the Christian religion has been saying, with varying degrees of intelligence and ethical intensity, that God's will for the world is one in which men will dwell together as brothers one of another and as his sons. But are we willing to work for that kind of world? to pay the same sacrificial price for its peace that we are now paying for war? If not, then by all means let us be consistent! Let's stop crying about the awfulness of war and accept it as did Hobbes and Treitschke as "the natural state of man." Let's steel ourselves to the fact that the children now playing at war in our gardens and playgrounds will soon be living and dying in the "purple slime of battle." But let those among us who choose this alternative know one further thing: in making this choice we step clear outside the Christian tradition! For you cannot separate that tradition from the hope, the dream, the vision and the plans for a peaceful world.

V

The hope of a peaceful world lies in the development of a world-wide vision of the unity of all men under God. Whoever thinks we can bring this to pass in one generation needs to reread Christian history and rethink the biblical phrase, "the patience of God." But the time for this generation to throw its total energies into the saving mission of the church is *now!*

To do this need not mean a new age of ruthlessness in religion. We do not want another era of the Inquisition. We do not want another age of persecution, of wars of religion. We do not contemplate the cruel extirpation and suppression of other religious faiths. That is wholly repugnant to Christian ethics. What I am saying is that we can and must seek this spiritual unity, this Christian commonwealth, by adopting the method of St. Francis of Assisi rather than that of Pope Innocent III.

Innocent III claimed for the Vatican "World mastery for the world's good." Under him persecution flamed and the Inquisition swept up to its bloody zenith. St. Francis claimed for himself and his followers, "World service for the world's good." And Christians of all ages and creedal divisions have acclaimed him one of God's noblemen. Innocent III was a great Catholic; Francis was a great Christian.

All of which adds up to this: Profound Christian convictions and decisive Christian actions do not require coercion; they seek *only the means of persuasion implicit in the meeting of human need.* If Christianity can demonstrate her ability to wrestle effectively with the bitter needs of the world, theological arguments will be unnecessary. But if Christianity either ignores or fails at this task such arguments are superficial if not impertinent. Was there ever a greater and more tragic wealth of opportunity for spreading the gospel than lies all around us today? Who knows how many hungry are to be fed? Or naked to be clothed? Or wounded to be bound up? Or prisoners to be visited? Can anyone measure the depths of the waves of anger, hatred, distrust and misunderstanding which sweep over us all today? These are the universal needs and problems of the day. The Christian claim of universality requires that we accept them as the *peculiarly Christian* problems of our day. Let every man who bears the name Christian preach his faith through problems like these! But if he will not let him know it for a fact that his words, however golden their intonation, are counterfeit to the core.

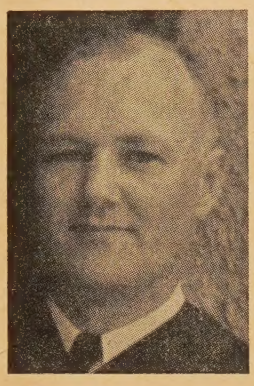
Such problems will be solved, if they are ever solved, only when there has come into being a consciousness of unity, a *oneness,* among the peoples of world. If the claim of the *oneness of all men in God* is rejected as being untrue or unworthy, then we are without hope for enduring peace. But if we embrace it with reason and faith and throw the whole weight of our life into its realization, enduring peace is possible. With this great task, this divine commission, let us proceed without apology and without reservation. Let us serve the Truth as God gives us to see the Truth with all that we have and are.

Freedom from Want

By Fred I. Cairns

The third is freedom from want, which, translated into world terms, means economic understandings which will secure to every nation a healthy peacetime life for its inhabitants—everywhere in the world.—President Roosevelt.

FREEDOM FROM WANT might have been possible long ago if Jesus had revealed the secret of his magic art which enabled him to break the loaves and fishes of one lad's lunch into enough food to feed five thousand hungry followers. But his art died with him. The greater lesson of the story, which seems also to be the true one, is a lesson in sharing; an account of Jesus' suggestion that those who had provisions share with those who had none. This idea of sharing is scarcely sugggested in the orthodox teachings of Christianity, perhaps because it detracts from the supernatural power of the Nazarene; perhaps because the lesson of sharing is one which might be attempted, and accomplished, by present-day Christians. It is so much easier to call attention to the peculiar powers of a god that make him great, but which we *cannot* follow, than to insist that a wise teacher gave a workable plan for the relief of mankind, which we if we are Christians *must* follow.



IN AN AGE OF SUPERPRODUCTION

But even if his art died with him, Jesus expressed faith in the possibility of our greater genius; he said on another occasion, "greater works shall ye do," and truly we have done them. Ours is an age of unprecedented production; we are able to draw from the earth and the sea and the air more than enough for the needs of all men "everywhere in the world." And yet, despite this peculiar scientific genius, which might have been regarded by a less enlightened generation as purely supernatural, we find men in want, in extreme want, "everywhere in the world." We find them ill-fed, ill-clad, ill-housed, without the necessities of a satisfying life.

This brutal fact reiterates to us that any governmental proclamation which would, even through "benevolent" conquest, grant to humankind freedom from want is a presumption far beyond parallel in all history. It is a presumption beyond the possibilities of free speech or free religion for all men everywhere in the world, for speech and religion are psychological factors involving only mental adjustments, only a more tolerant mind which will not react violently to differences of opinion and outlook. Freedom from want involves man's fundamental urge for security, the inherent greed of man which causes him to lay up stores

for himself above that which he is able to use in his lifetime, or the literature of his children or his children's children; and to lay up such stores in the face of his starving fellows, his ill-clad and ill-housed brothers. That is why freedom from want is nearer the impossible than any of the other freedoms offered in the idealism of this war.

Before we may have freedom from want, however great our scientific production, our materialistic genius, we must learn the lesson of the loaves, the lesson of sharing, even to the meager lunch which we have brought against the hunger of the long afternoon.

THE QUESTION OF WAGES

Another aspect of human nature which makes freedom from want unlikely, impossible, until we shall have accomplished freedom from greed, is this: men with empty stomachs do not question the wage they work for. They work cheap. Men with full stomachs begin to think in terms of higher wages, of something more than full stomachs. New Deal experiments with such projects as the WPA demonstrated one fact: men who are able to get enough to eat without working will not work for just enough to eat. We were worried when we had some ten million idle men in our land; we called many of them unemployables. The more comfortable, the pious, proclaimed they would never work again; our government had ruined them. But where are they today, with war wages higher than unskilled labor ever dared dream of? Where are they now that they can work for fifty dollars a week? Not only has war industry absorbed them all, but it could absorb still others perhaps even less willing to work than these "victims" of the government dole.

This means simply that if freedom from want ever does become a reality our captains of industry will find it increasingly difficult to employ their fellows at starvation wages while they themselves reap the rewards of the labor of thousands. The lust for power will be difficult to satisfy when freedom from want shall have been obtained for all men "everywhere in the world." Consequently it is not likely that those who hold power, or aspire to power, will consent without struggle—violent struggle—to any system which will put obstacles in the way of their realization.

HIGH PRODUCTION, WITH GREED, FAILS

This is an amazing world in which we live. Mass production, youngest and dearest child of science, provides in superabundance and is capable of providing much more when world markets are able to absorb that production. Farms are made to produce all out of proportion to any condition which makes necessary the "sweat" of many brows. Hens are induced to lay twice in twenty-four hours. Cows are bred to give more milk than was thought possible three decades ago. These developments tend to free man for other work than the production of necessities; men have time for art and education, and most significantly for still more research which will free still more men. With rivers dammed to supply power through electrical energy, and also to turn waste desert into fertile land, the miracle of Jesus is as child's play. Only the lesson of the loaves continues to go unheeded, and man continues to go hungry, ill-clad, ill-housed.

Lest our picture appear too bright and the probability of freedom from want too likely; lest we imagine that greed cannot forever keep man from the food and raiment and shelter he needs, let us turn the clock back a very few years, not more than a decade. Now we see the actual production of more than the markets can absorb. There is a surplus; not a surplus of goods that men can use, but a surplus above what they can pay for. And that happens? Every third cotton stalk, laden with swollen bolls, is plowed under. Unnumbered hogs, unnumbered cattle are killed wastefully. That which might have been food and clothing is viciously destroyed as a sacrifice to the profit system. Houses stand empty while men live in "Hoovervilles" on the outskirts of every large city in the land. Whole families crowded into miserable huts built with their own hands of any available materials, old sheets of tin taken from highway advertising signs. We went through that too, remember. And for the sake of profits. We may also remember a meeting of fruitgrowers in Florida where it was decided to burn surplus crops so the remainder could be sold at a profit. Even while they met, certainly while the fruit burned, thousands of children were suffering the irremedial handicap of malnutrition because they could not obtain that which was wilfully and viciously destroyed.

GREED AS A WAR CAUSE

However proficient we may become at production, materialism is useless and vicious if it is entered into for profit. So long as we put profits above people, freedom from want is a mockery. In our saner days we recognized "have" and "have not" nations, and realized that the greed of the "haves" and the distress of the "have nots" would result in war. It did so result, but we have since forgotten that "have" and "have not" were central in the issue which caused the war. It is easier to recall the cruelty of the enemy to her own people, the slaughter of the Jews and other shameful and inhuman acts. We forget—and conveniently—that greed, a greed essentially shared by us, had much to do with setting off this world conflagration.

Freedom from want is impossible while men like the first Morgan are idolized by later generations essentially because they made money. We forget about his treason in selling defective arms to his own nation at a shameful profit after those same arms had been discarded by the government. Thus he made a start; his further contributions to the world consisted in double-dealings with markets, with squeezing enemy and friend alike for financial advantage. Not one thing of material value did he produce, but his generation allowed him to live in fabulous luxury while thousands who were at least bending their backs occasionally in honest work went ill-fed, ill-clad, ill-housed. Morgan's children and his children's children also

lived in fabulous luxury, and still there is no production to justify such wealth and power in a land where people are supposed to be primary.

SEEDS OF REVOLUTION

Freedom from want is impossible while plantation owners are looked up to as gentlemen and their workers, whose sweat produces the owner's wealth, are held in contempt, ill-fed, ill-clad, ill-housed. As long as the unproductive, who through dishonesty, trickery, exploitation or other instrumentalities grow rich, are considered the elite and the workers at best allowed to live through their condescension there can be no freedom from want whatever marvels science may discover to increase production.

Once there was a people who used its workers too hard. The Egyptians, it is recorded, lived off the sweat of their Jewish slaves. They enjoyed all the comforts, all the luxuries, all the finery. They worked their Jewish slaves harder and harder. Finally they demanded that these workers make brick without straw; at least they were expected to find their own straw and to turn out as many brick as ever. Then the Jews murmured, and a leader arose in their midst. There was organization, and there was revolt; and there was an end to the "racket" of the Egyptians.

That has happened closer home than Egypt. It happened in France, and it happened in Russia; it happened in Spain too, and if the Spanish effort has not yet borne its fruit it still illustrates the point. Revolution is an ugly thing; it is war. And war, whether the rebellion of one nation, or several, against the rest, or one person, or several, against the rest within a nation, is a waste of man productiveness, a waste of man himself. This waste cannot long continue if we expect ever to have a world free from want.

Greed must surely go. But it is a human factor. No machine will ever be invented that can remove it from man. Only man himself can do that. And until it goes it will thwart our noblest plans, it will make a mockery of our greatest ideals, it will vitiate even the enjoyment of that which we are able to accomplish in spite of it. Two-thirds of the people of this world, in normal times, work to raise food in one form or another, and that many are below the decent standards of food and clothing and shelter. Many of those who raise the food have not themselves enough to eat, though they raise more than enough for their own needs. Greed must go; service must replace profit; sympathy must replace contempt before freedom from want can be seriously hoped for anywhere in the world.

SOMETHING BETTER THAN GADGETS

Be sure that in the postwar world guns will still be our gods, even as they are our hope and our trust during the war. Because we are rich and powerful—and, shall we say, victorious—we may be tempted to force our productive economy upon other peoples, even in the name of humanity. We may insist that the women of the East must use machines for washing their clothes instead of gathering at the river's bank where they chat idly with their neighbors during a process that may be more pleasant than tedious. Lin Yutang writes bluntly in his book, *Between Tears and Laughter,* insisting that these women may prefer their methods to ours. Experience has surely demonstrated that people in many parts of the world prefer their own religion to ours despite our strivings to convert their heathen estate into a more "civilized" Christianity, and often by means of instruments which are anything but Christian. Or one may walk into any Mexican village in the heat of the day and find men sitting about on the sidewalks asleep. Another evidence of retarded civilization? Ought they not to be at work producing for themselves the noble gadgets which make life so worthwhile for us? Perhaps it were better to remember that they may not want gadgets as much as we.

Perhaps it were better to realize that there are different kinds of people in this world, different cultures, different desires. Perhaps it were better to remember that if we would make this world truly free from want we must take into consideration *all* the wants. It might help to recall that a certain Indian leader has often refused food for tragically long periods because he wanted more to obtain political freedom for his people. What are gadgets to a nation like India, to a people like the American Negro, to a culture like that of the Jews?

'TAKE NO THOUHT FOR YOUR LIFE'

And let us not forget, too, that there was once a teacher whose school was the shore of Galilee, and whose followers saw in him a veritable incarnation of God. Did he demand first of all that stomachs be filled? We dare not deny the value of material necessities; no life can possibly be full if the stomach is empty, but the Galilean put something else first: "Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not life more than meat and the body than raiment?" What did he put first? "Seek ye first the kingdom of God." And that means getting rid of greed. It means getting rid of the lust for power, the willingness to exploit one's fellows and to crush them with burdens that enrich them not, but make possible an accumulation for the privileged few far beyond any conceivable need.

Freedom from want is possible, and verily it is desirable. But be sure to examine the undistorted picture! It is not so simple as the mere ability to produce, to harness rivers and irrigate fields. Nor so easy even as finding innumerable uses for the peanut, or making garments from the stalk of the cotton plant instead of the boll. Freedom from want means more than an economic and industrial revolution; it means a moral and philosophical revolution as well, for all men everywhere in the world.

PAGANISM is the way of darkness and death that spells the end of civilization. Christianity is the way of brotherhood and life. God leaves to us, as free men and women, the choice. FRANCIS B. SAYRE.

Shall We Yield to the Pessimists?

By John Ray Ewers

TODAY the pessimists seem to have the best of it. There surely are plenty of facts to back up a discouraging attitude. But it is always darkest before dawn. It is now, relatively, about four o'clock in the morning. The sun is about to rise. "Night's candles are burned out, and rosy-fingered dawn stands tip-toe on the misty mountain tops." At least that is the hope of all good men.

There are those who insist that the church has failed. No united voice of Christ's church in particular, nor of religion in general, has halted the insane hatreds of war. We may affirm the same of education, of world-wide business, of inventions and science. All have failed us in this hour of peril and need. Culture has broken down. But shall we surrender? Not when the sun is coming up!

THIS SORRY WORLD

In vain the pessimists remind us of China. They tell us of her weakness, of the way in which she is divided, of the gains of Japanese armies there. China, they say, is about to fall. They also tell us about India. Hindus and Mohammedans struggle for supremacy, and all would like to have independence. Poor, rebellious, divided—that is India. South America, they tell us, has a different—a Latin—culture. The countries of South America instinctively dislike us and our ways. Argentina plainly is our rival, all the provinces of South America are fascist in tendency. "What can we hope from them?" ask the pessimists. They remind us that even if we win the victory speedily, Europe will be ruined and cannot be rebuilt or put in order for fifty years. Thus the pessimists go on picturing, with depressing insistence, the sad and hopeless condition of our world.

Nor do they stop there. With a fierce intensity they tell us about profiteers, grafters, strikes in war plants, political scheming for power, and they call our attention to the rivalries between American churches. They tell us of the rise of "secularism," the breakdown of culture, the debasement of the arts, and they predict a century of debts, trouble and sorrow.

SAVING MINORITIES

What shall we say to these things? Every intelligent person is bound to see these evils and to be discouraged by them. Just before the war Thomas Mann, leading literary figure of Germany, made his way to our country and has since become a citizen. In strong words he is reminding us that the countries of Europe which were overrun by the nazis did not lie down but continued to resist, if not in the open, then in the underground. How easy it would have been for the Czechs, the Poles, the Norwegians, the Danes, the Dutch and the French, as well as the Greeks—how easy it would have been for them to have accepted their fate and to have made no resistance! But, to their eternal glory, they did resist and still resist.

War is bad, but there is something worse: the lack of that spirit which resists evil. An authority upon the modern drama, in considering the great war plays, draws our attention to the remarkable fact that "faith in the future" runs through them like a theme song. No longer are men deluded by the idea of the glory of war, therefore men will not be disillusioned. War is a dirty business, a ghastly necessity, and men say: "Let us fling ourselves into it and get it over so that we may live decently." It is night, but the dawn is at hand.

The chaplains and the clergy in general have the same outlook. While they cannot fail to observe the evil in the world, they have no notion of giving way to despair. They hold a mighty faith in the future and they say: "If God be for us, who can be against us?" With a spiritual confidence which is as strong as it is deep and sincere, they affirm with Christ, "We have overcome the world." True religion makes it possible for those who possess faith to overcome the world and to conquer all earthly evils and obstacles. "Faith is the victory which overcomes the world." We saw it, primarily, in Jesus Christ on the cross. He would not run away, he would not compromise, he was willing to die for a cause. We see it also in heroes and heroines, in all those who make deep sacrifices for a worthy cause.

BUILDING UPON THE ROCK

There may be many bad men and women; there may be selfish leaders in many quarters; there may be profiteers and cowards in large numbers; but as long as there is even a vicarious tenth, as long as there is a minority who have not lost hope, nor abandoned vision; as long as even a relatively few keep the most precious faith, we need not become utterly pessimistic. Good, brave men create faith. Now the glorious business of the churches, of all religious groups everywhere, is to create and maintain faith in God. Once you accept God, once you believe that the universe is friendly, once you are persuaded that the stars fight for righteousness and that the world is founded upon truth, you have a basis for optimism. You are building your house, not upon the shifting sands of changing opinion, but upon the eternal rock of everlasting divinity.

One of the lads from our church crashed in a plane over Rome. We caught our breath, we dropped our heads, and then someone, thinking of this fine Pitt student, a former leader of our young people, asked: "Can we still believe in eternal life?" Yes, we can—we do. Now we can see how much difference it makes if we actually believe in God and if we truly have faith in eternal life. Our young brother lives on—eternally. He is alive now.

There are times when you cannot trifle with life and death: you are up against stark realities. This is no moment for arguments and petty academic discussions. You either have faith or you do not, and God pity you if your house is built upon the sands!

FINDING GOD IN WORSHIP

We press this most important point further. Does anything happen to you when you go to worship in a church? I mean something that thrills you, that changes your life for the better, that sends you away with a sense of sins forgiven, with a new conviction of peace with God, with reinforced resolutions to do the right, and with a more satisfying faith in the loving presence of Almighty God in your own individual life? Church worship must certainly be more than a mere lecture, however brilliant; it must be more than a concert, however beautiful; more than a club, however socially respectable; more than an adjunct to business, however profitable. All of this is earthly. Worship must lift you, and bring you into definite relationship with God. "Spirit with spirit can meet." God must touch your heart and set it on fire. Something must happen and that something must be divine. This miracle may happen in a grand cathedral, or it may happen in some plain country meeting house—but it must happen. The people must find God and touch him—if only the hem of his garment.

Much should happen spiritually when the Scripture lesson is read. Is it nothing to hear the truth of God proclaimed? Is it nothing to listen to the findings of the world's highest men of religious genius? Something should happen when prayers are made in church. We are getting the connection; we are getting through to God; we are talking to him, crying out for the things which we feel we must have; and God is answering us. It is not a one-way conversation; it is not a calling into the empty skies. God answers us; in fact, he never fails to answer. Something should happen in the "communion of saints," when good people, Christian people, get together. Where two or three are gathered together, Christ has promised to be in the midst. Christ is there.

MIRACLES OF FAITH

If the Master came among us today, he might say, "O ye of little faith," just as he did say it when he moved among men centuries ago. Or, again, he might add: "If you only had faith like a mustard seed you could move mountains." You and I have seen faith do exactly those things; doors have opened in solid stone walls, by faith; bridges have leaped across broad and deep rivers, by faith; the sick have walked, by faith; bad men have been changed into angels by faith, thousands have been converted to Christ by faith; deserts have blossomed like the rose, by faith, because the waters from the hills of God have been channeled into them. We do not break laws to do these things; we only employ the higher laws. If God be for us, who can be against us?" You and I are witnessing the downfall of evil men at this very hour. Evil carries the seeds of its own destruction. It is the good that is divine and which endures. We need faith to see what is going on in this crucial hour of our world's history.

This is the day when faith begins to pay dividends which will last a thousand years. Only the dull person doubts now. God is marching on.

GOD IS IN THE WIND

The day is breaking. A new world opens before us in which shall dwell righteousness—righteousness which your faith and consequent heroism helped to create. God and men must work together. God needs you for hands, but you need God for power and direction. He goes naked to the battle who goes without God. He only invites defeat who advances without God's blessing. Still our noblest prayer is this—"Thy will be done." It is the wind of God's spirit which brings spiritual victory.

The other day a friend of mine went out to his country place. He set fire to some dead grass in order to get his garden ready. In the lifeless air, the grass burned scarcely at all. Then suddenly a breeze came up—whence he did not know—and the grass burned with such a fury that men had to be called upon to save the woods. God is in the wind; he sends it.

"The pessimist sees the difficulty in every opportunity, but the optimist sees the opportunity in every difficulty."

Our National Mistake

WHAT it boils down to, in a crisis which we all admit and proclaim requires and will require our utmost ability, effort, economy and sacrifice of nonessentials, we are almost literally pouring into the sewer more than its equivalent in cost and getting nothing in return, unless imaginary pink elephants are something. In the long list of mistakes which mar the execution of our defense program, there is surely none deserving of a higher place than this. The United States is the only major power affected by war which has taken no steps to curtail the consumption of intoxicating liquor as a measure of increasing efficiency in production.

From an editorial in the New York Times.

BEHIND the technicalities of economic reconstruction and political device lies the truth that God is the Creator of the world and the Father of all men; that he created men and nations for fellowship in his family; that his purpose is the supreme reality of human history and that policies which depart from that purpose must eventually lead to failure and disaster.

WILLIAM PATON.

LIFE is a mysterious, baffling, often tragic enigma; and the cross, which is an enigma too, talks to our true estate—a huge, historic tragedy that yet takes place in you and me, a revelation of man at his worst that yet awakens faith in man at his best, a crushing defeat of righteousness that is yet one of the greatest victories righteousness ever won, a supreme denial of God that yet has supremely revealed him.

HARRY EMERSON FOSDICK.

The Sin Against the Land

By Ernest F. Nolte

I brought you to a garden land, to eat its fruits and its good things; but you came and defiled my land, and made my heritage an abomination. Jeremiah 2:7 (American Translation)

THE ABUSE of the soil which Jeremiah condemns brings to mind many dismal pictures of the countryside of America. Eroded hillsides, dust storms, floods on an unprecedented scale, a host of rivers and streams carrying rich top soil to the sea, wasted forests and yawning gullies speak loudly of our sin against the land.

Consider these appalling facts: Three hundred years ago we had 820 million acres of virgin forests; today we have only 630 million acres of which only 100 million acres are considered old growth. Three hundred years ago we had 600 million acres of virgin grasslands; today there are only "scraps" of this precious heritage left. Fifteen per cent, or 282 million acres, of our land has been ruined or damaged by erosion. In the cotton states alone 38 million acres have been ruined. We lose enough top soil each year to cover 1,500,000 acres with a blanket twelve inches thick. That is enough soil to fill a string of freight cars which would extend eighteen times around the earth at the equator. This tragic loss of rich top soil is seen further in the rapid siltation of water supply reservoirs of the nation. According to government bulletins, 21 per cent of the nation's water supply reservoirs will have a useful life of less than fifty years. In regard to Boulder Dam we read: "Unless adequate measures are adopted, this reservoir will become virtually useless, by reason of silt deposits, before the passing of the fifth generation."

This siltation is due to the fact that the watersheds from which these reservoirs draw their water are not protected and hence the surface soil is being deposited in the bottom of these expensive projects where it is useless. Such soil at the bottom of reservoirs does not support people. It is wasted.

TOP SOIL AND CIVILIZATION

This tragic waste has come to pass during the last hundred years; the greater part of it in the past century. When you consider that several centuries amount to but a tick of the clock as time goes, it makes our sin against the land all the more shocking.

Consider again the meaning of this waste. H. H. Bennett, chief of the Soil Conservation Service of the Department of Agriculture, points out that our civilization rests on nine inches of top soil. It is now, because of our waste, only five to seven inches. In many places it is gone altogether. The significance of this is seen in the fact that the famed Tigris-Euphrates valley which once supported thirty to fifty million people now supports but five million people on a very low standard. The answer is to be found in the "miniature mountain ranges of silt," ten to fifty feet high, which are to be found piled beside the ancient irrigation ditches. "When the soil goes the sites of great cities and cultures become deserts." Once 100,000 people lived in the Negeb and Sinai region. Now the area supports scarcely 2,000 Bedouins. The story of these and other sections of the world is one of depleted top soil.

SAVING SOULS AND SOILS

We have a touch of that tragedy in the mined soil of the cotton states where bad land use and continued one-crop farming have destroyed what God made good. When the top soil goes the "grapes of wrath" are harvested and people degenerate along "Tobacco Road."

Wasted land means wasted people. Is it nothing to us that in one southern state, where the soil is badly worn, seven out of ten selectees are rejected for military service? Virile people and fertile soil go together. You can't have the one without the other.

From a religious standpoint, wasted land makes all talk of saving souls a bit irrelevant. You can't save souls where the soil does not support souls to save. At the Save-the-Soil Clinic held at Oklahoma City, a member of the Oklahoma Bankers' Association, in a panel discussion, made the remark that he thought preachers ought to be vitally interested in soil conservation since, as he said, "you can't save souls where there are no souls to save." He was right. Nothing is as vital to all the people of this land today as this matter of saving our soil.

When your pastor was introduced to the president of Oklahoma A and M College recently, he was presented as a soil conservation preacher. Well, every minister of the gospel ought to be such, for this is a matter of life and death and it is with such issues that a minister deals.

RAPING GOD'S GOOD EARTH

What then shall we do? We need, first of all, to confess our sin and recognize that we stand under the judgment of God for our continued desecration of the "holy earth." For some reason we have not been conscious of any guilt in our destructive use of the land. Man saw no connection between his religion and the way he did his farming. Religion was something he concerned himself with on Sunday, not when he was plowing or sowing or harvesting. As has been said, "Many a man who never thought of raping the neighbor's daughter, has consistently raped the land." Men must recognize that this is the bitter truth.

God made the land good. "He planted a garden and took the man and put him into the garden . . . to dress it and to keep it." But, as Jeremiah pointed out, man "defiled it, and made my heritage an abom-

ination." Man has been destroying that which belongs to God in the first place.

All tillers of the soil who have been careless or greedy and so unfaithful in their stewardship need to confess their sins to their Creator.

OUR STEWARDSHIP UNDER GOD

In the second place, we need to recognize that man, under God, is a steward of the earth. Man is a trustee of the earth who is responsible to God the rightful Owner. Walter C. Loudermilk has stated the attitude which ought to prevail, in what he calls the eleventh commandment: "Thou shalt inherit the holy earth as a faithful steward, conserving its resources and productivity from generation to generation. Thou shalt safeguard thy fields from soil erosion, thy living waters from drying up, thy forests from desolation and protect thy hills from overgrazing by thy herds, that thy descendants may have abundance forever. If any shall fail in this stewardship of the land thy fruitful fields shall become sterile, stony ground and wasting gullies and thy descendants shall decrease and live in poverty or perish from off the face of the earth."

If we are to avert further tragedy, despair and chaos, we must accept some such attitude to the land. "The land is mine; for ye are strangers and sojourners with me," we are told in Leviticus. What we have is not ours to exploit or destroy. It is a trust from God to be administered to his glory and for the good of our fellows; not only those of our own generation but also of those yet unborn.

The attitude which Mr. Loudermilk describes in his eleventh commandment must be basic to right land use. For when a man understands that in his use of the land he is a servant of the Holy God he will, like Moses, take off his shoes, so to speak, for he will realize he is on "holy ground."

MAN AS A PARTNER OF GOD

In the third place, we need to dedicate ourselves to better land use practices and to conservation measures to save the soil. Chester Davis said recently, "No farmer is a good farmer unless he farms to save the soil." I should like to put it this way: "No farmer is a *Christian* farmer unless he farms to save the soil."

In the conservation and enrichment and upbuilding of the soil we have a share in the continuous process of creation with our Maker. By so doing we acknowledge the Lordship of the Eternal God and man's partnership in God's plan for a fruitful earth. Such a partnership can create "a good land; a land of brooks and waters, of fountains and springs, flowing forth in valleys and hills; a land of wheat and barley, and of vines and fig trees and pomegranates; a land of olive trees and honey." Here, as the writer of Deuteronomy continues, "shalt thou eat bread without scarceness; thou shalt not lack anything." It is in man's hands to build such a land, if he will. It is the kind of land which results from a conscientious stewardship.

In rendering a faithful stewardship we will not only be fulfilling our obligations to our Creator, but we will also help preserve the real wealth of the nation. As Elmer Peterson has pointed out, "Man's living is derived from the soil alone, and as long as people and soil survive, the real resources of civilization survive." Our real wealth is not buried in the vaults at Fort Knox, Kentucky. It is in the precious top soil which sustains man and beast.

As Christian people we have a responsibility to redeem the soil as well as souls. It is our job to release constructive forces which will bring health and healing to those areas which have been made sickly by our carelessness and exploitation.

A FIELD FOR PIONEERING

The practical measures by which this is to be done, such as crop rotation, terracing, contour farming, strip-cropping, reforestation and permanent grass, water conservation, winter cover, and diversification are known to all of you. What we need is sufficient consecration to the task of saving the soil to go from the one-cash-crop type of agriculture to the more diversified type which is necessary to any constructive program for the salvation of the soil. In addition to consecration, it will mean courageous pioneering on the part of some. New land use practices will be accepted slowly. If Faulkner, for instance, is right in the thesis which he sets forth in *Plowman's Folly,* it will be a long time before it will be generally accepted. And of course that will be true even of some of the simplest methods for assuring the conservation of the soil. Only as some have the courage to strike out along new lines of endeavor will we be on our way to general conservation practices. Yes, some of you will have to be as hardy as some of those first pioneers who broke out these plains. Here, as H. H. Bennett says, is the new frontier of agriculture.

Conscious then of the tragic waste which has already occurred, let us humbly confess our sin against the land to the Creator and Sustainer of all life, recognize our stewardship and our obligation to generations yet unborn and dedicate ourselves to right land use practices and conservation measures to save what is left of the "holy earth."

RELIGION is not a hard thing to which but few can attain. Religion is a much broader matter than many people think it. It is the daily living of life as a partner with God in working for the things that universal good will points to—the things which therefore ought to be. If life comes from God, if life is lived and must be lived in God, then daily life can be a religious act—and should be, in reality, the highest and truest religious act. WINFRED RHOADES.

A BOMBING PLANE has power to destroy. It has no power to build or to redeem. But consider the power of God. It can open men's eyes. It can bring them to repentance. It can deliver them from pride and arrogance. It can prompt them to do works of mercy. . . . It can bring them to a point where they are willing and glad to make any personal sacrifice that may be necessary to the achievement of peace on earth.

ERNEST FREMONT TITTLE.

Change Your Mind and Accept the New Age

By Talmage C. Johnson

Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. Matthew 3:1.

A FEW WEEKS ago Adiel J. Moncrief, Jr., pastor of the Walmer Road Baptist Church of Toronto, Canada, gave me a new and almost startling translation of what John the Baptist preached two thousand years ago in the wilderness of Judea. Our King James version puts it: "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Moffatt translates it: "Repent, the reign of heaven is near." Goodspeed makes it read: "Repent for the kingdom of heaven is coming." But Mr. Moncrief says that, in modern vernacular, the burden of John's message was simply this: "Change your mind and accept the new age."

While the Greek word usually translated "repent" has a wider connotation, including sorrow for sin, its primary meaning is a change of mind. And the coming of the Kingdom, or a wider extension of the reign of God, always means a new era in human history. Thus what John said did amount to what we mean when we talk about a change of mind and accepting a new age. When Jesus began to preach, following his baptism and temptation, he too took up the theme: "Change your mind and accept a new age."

I

When we get away from the often quoted versions of what both John and Jesus said and put it this way, their message startles us by its aptness to our times. So long as we read, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand," we can believe that it was a suitable message for an ancient day, or we can accept it as a kind of religious formula or abstract principle for evangelists to talk about. But when we say, "Change your mind and accept a new age," we begin to see that perhaps it calls for some action by us and to fear that it requires something of us which we are not eager to do. In fact, it sounds suspiciously "New Dealish" and even revolutionary. Most people find it painful to change their minds about anything very important. They are set in their ways of thought, and they do not wish to be disturbed. And it is still more painful to them to accept a new age, after having become comfortably ensconced in things as they are.

It is not hard to understand why the religious and political leaders resented such preaching by John the Baptist and by Jesus. Probably Mr. Winston Churchill, for whom most of us feel a high admiration, would resent it today, especially were it preached with any reference to India. For Mr. Churchill does not wish to preside over the liquidation of the British empire, no matter how necessary that might be in a new age for India. Nor would some of our own politicians, especially those who are now greatly concerned with holding their seats in the national Congress, listen with approval to the suggestion that they change their minds and accept a new age. And it is greatly to be feared that some of our modern religious leaders, in what we call prominent pulpits or at the head of great church boards and church institutions, would not take kindly to a new age which called for a new setup in which perchance they might fare less well. Usually new ages are acceptable only to the underprivileged.

No, it is not surprising that leaders of state and church should have conspired against the men preaching about a change of mind and an acceptance of a new age. Some pretended to accept the message, but John who perceived their hypocrisy rebuked them saying: "You brood of snakes! Who warned you to escape from the wrath that is coming? Then produce fruits that will be consistent with your professed repentance." It is still true in our day that not all who claim to change their minds, or who speak of a new age, are prepared to bring forth fruits consistent with the spoken word. Many there are who now talk eloquently of the "four freedoms," but resist every attempt to make them actual for people other than themselves!

But when a new age is coming in, there is no way to hold it back. As John said, "The axe is laid unto the root of the trees; therefore, every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit will be hewn down and cast into the fire." Just as sure as it was true when John announced it, and when Jesus took up the theme and carried it infinitely further, so now again is the axe of God's history laid at the very roots of modern life. We may as well change our minds and accept the new age, for we can do no other.

Our secular civilization, with its boasted materialistic progress and its pagan worship of mammon, is about to have the experience which once befell the famous Humpty Dumpty!

Believe it or not, the old age is on its way out! And all the might of empires and United Nations cannot stay its passing or call it back again. Planes, tanks, guns, ships and armed men cannot halt the course of history. The new age is coming in! Not all the chambers of commerce, nor all the hired priests of privilege can block its coming. When the axe of God's history has once been laid at the roots of the trees, every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is cut down and cast into the fire. You had better change your mind and accept the new age. You cannot resist it. If you try, you will be blown to smithereens!

II

I have no sympathy for those who are desperately trying to stave off the arrival of a new age by crying out such ancient shibboleths as "state's rights" in matters of government, "free enterprise" in matters of

economics, and "separation of church and state" in matters of religion. This is not to say that these ideas themselves have no intrinsic worth or power, and must be altogether cast aside. It is only to say that the forms which have crystallized about them are not sacrosanct. As a matter of fact, I believe that the ideas are themselves so dynamic that once released from outgrown forms they are capable of producing new and better ones. But certainly they must not be employed to check the coming of social, political and religious changes made imperative by new and better world conditions.

But I do have considerable sympathy for those men and women who are honestly distressed about the future, and who fear that the real values of the past will be lost in the new age now arriving. Recently, in an address to a local chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution, I ventured to say that many of the social forms and institutions produced by the dynamic ideas which gained currency in Colonial America and in the first years of the American Republic, are now breaking down. I contended that these ideas, again released from crystallization, will prove capable of producing new forms. One of the most intelligent women of the group was greatly troubled by what I had said. She asked: "Are we really going to lose the things which for so long we have held dear? Are we going to lose our homes, our pattern of family life, our individual initiative, and the distinctions based upon merit and character?" I am sure that woman was not far from the Kingdom of God.

I felt justified in assuring her that she need not fear the new age. Indeed, we are not going to lose anything from the old age which is sound and good. The axe of history will not cut down the trees which are bearing good fruit, but the pruning knife may be applied in order that they may bear more and better fruit. The long view of history justifies the thought that nothing good is ever lost, and that nothing evil can forever live.

III

John the Baptist and Jesus were right. Their advice was sound. A new age came! Those who changed their minds and accepted it found that it was infinitely better than the old. It called for sacrifice, self-denial and cross-bearing. Indeed it did! In many cases it required leaving father and mother, brother and sister, wife and children. For some it meant giving up wealth and embracing poverty. At times it set brother against brother. For some it meant facing long and cruel persecution; for others it meant a martyr's death. The new age was ushered in at great cost, but it more than compensated for all the loss. Those who changed their minds and accepted it found in it satisfactions never before dreamed of.

It will be so again. The new age which is upon us will be a better age than the world has yet known, a wider reign on earth of the Kingdom of Heaven which was new in the first century and still is new in the twentieth century. It will not be another kingdom of heaven. The principles and laws of the Kingdom are from everlasting to everlasting. But it will be a fresh application of them to earthly life. That has already produced new age after new age, and it will continue to do so until God's will is done on earth as perfectly as in heaven. The new age, now dawning out of the increased darkness which ever precedes a dawn, will take us farther toward the goal than humanity has yet gone. So change your mind and accept it! Then bring forth fruits; that is, begin to live the kind of life you want the new age to produce. It is wonderful to have a part in ushering in a new age!

Christians today have opportunities comparable with those of Peter, Paul and other Christians of the first century. Will we use them as did the Christians of old?

A Pastoral Prayer

By Everett W. Palmer

O GOD, who art always near and ever ready with Thy mighty redemption, how much we need Thee! Beyond and above these city streets are the glory of the sky and the beauty of the earth, miracles of singing splendor. To whom shall we bring our thanks for these sublime gifts of mystery and grandeur, if not to Thee?

With the dawn of each new day we take up burdens, often too grievous for us alone; we know again old blemishes and dark remembrances; we enter upon decisions, testings, perils, often of greater import than we at first suppose. To whom shall we look for saving strength and sure guidance, if not to Thee? And at the close of day, when the dust and weariness of the world is heavy upon us, where shall we lay down our unfinished toil, or find humility in our victories, or courage in our defeats, if not at Thy feet?

Thou who art the King of kings and the Judge of nations, hear our prayer for this nation and its leaders. May Thy wisdom and strength undergird our President and all who serve with him in directing the affairs of our land. May the ancient flames of freedom burn brightly in our America, may the works of righteousness be supported, and throughout our far-flung land may justice be done.

We pray too for all the peoples of the earth, our enemies as well as our friends. Restrain the hands of evil men; bring their devices to naught and lead them to repentance. Reinforce mightily with Thy power all who labor for the good and true, that their efforts may be sustained and their faith may never die. So may the day come quickly when wars shall end and peace prevail. We ask it all through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Carpenter

A Sermon for Children by Peter H. Pleune

Is not this the carpenter? Mark 6:3.

THE PEOPLE who asked this question did so with a sneer. They meant, "Who is he?" and answered it in their own minds, "just a carpenter." But today we know Jesus because, though he is the Savior of the world, he also worked with his hands.

What kind of things did Jesus make when he was a carpenter? We know that he made plows and yokes and houses, for he talked about these things when he preached to people. He said his yoke was easy. That is the kind of yokes he made. They were a good fit. He talked about plows that would plow straight, and about houses built on a rock instead of upon sand. That is the kind of carpenter he was.

And I am sure that Jesus was not always making new things; he was also mending broken things. In our Good-Will Industries they tell us that they can use anything to repair something else. I imagine that Jesus must have done that in his shop, too. At any rate, he is a carpenter still who is mending things. And the thing he mends today is broken human lives. There is a picture that an artist drew for a Mission in New York city. It shows a man, broken by drink and idleness, standing against a wall. He is a most sorry looking sight. And the picture shows that around and beyond the corner of the wall is the lighted entrance to the Mission. The poster reads, "There is a place near by where a Carpenter still mends broken men."

JESUS, THE CARPENTER, NEEDS HELPERS

We all need mending sometimes, even boys and girls. Your toys get broken and out of order, and you do too. You get mean streaks, and selfish habits; you have mad times, and untruthful ways. You need to be repaired and put into good shape again. There is nobody can do that like Jesus. The Carpenter of Nazareth is a repair man. He still can make good boys and girls out of bad ones. And he alone can do it.

Now this Carpenter needs helpers. A carpenter can rarely work alone. There are heavy timbers to lift; there are beams to be held straight, and much that takes four hands instead of two. I do not believe that I ever saw a carpenter building a house all alone. Carpenters say that the trouble with their trade today is that skilled workmen are dying out. There are many who are just handy men, working at carpentering part of the time, and jacks-of-all-trades doing a little carpentry work. What their trade needs, good carpenters say, is what they had in the old-fashioned days—helpers—boys who would learn the trade from the ground up.

The Carpenter of Nazareth needs that kind of helpers. The first thing he did when he left his shop to begin work on building a new world was to call twelve men that he might train them for service. They were just ordinary people, and they did not all become preachers. But he took them, and he trained them in helping to mend men, and to build a better world. And the time came when they went out to be better men themselves, and, with their hands and lives, kept busy in the business, not of making yokes and plows and homes and furniture, but making men.

Jesus is still a Carpenter and he needs helpers. He needs boys and girls too. I suppose that you have helped your daddy sometimes when he was fixing something about the house, handing him something he needed, or running an errand for him. I wonder if Jesus the Carpenter does not need you to be willing to help him like that, to hold his tools, or to hand him his nails, or to carry his basket, or even to sweep out the shavings, so that he won't feel that he is left all alone in his work.

What a lovely thing it is that Mark did not forget to tell us that Jesus was a Carpenter who worked with his hands. And surely that ought to mean for us that our hands should be busy, too, making things better, mending them, and helping him in all the good things he is trying to do for our world.

We older people grew up in a generation whose major slogan might be phrased thus: Seek ye first science and its powers, and all these things shall be added unto you. How reasonable that sounded! What vistas opened up before mankind as one realm after another came under our control! But now Jesus turns out again to be right. Something else must be put first—righteousness first—or else all these powers laid hold on by demonic forces, twisted to diabolical ends, will destroy the life and culture, the art of beauty, the homes, economies and cities of men on a scale hitherto undreamed. The most terrifying fact about our modern world is the scientific power we have with which to destroy our selves.

Harry Emerson Fosdick.

Covetousness is evil—even in the land of the free! Future historians will severely chastise the people of our generation for our excessive liking for comforts, luxuries and quick wealth, as well as for the manner in which we have exploited and wrecked our mines, forests, fields and streams. To the youth of 2000 A. D. we shall appear as a rather depraved, greedy, short-sighted and lightheaded people. In plain blunt words, America has been living under an utterly false philosophy. We are covetous. Let us be brave enough to face the facts. When Wendell Willkie talks about our American "way of life," or when other men use that fascinating term, the precise meaning should be clearly set forth.

John Ray Ewers.

The root error of our day is to make Christ optional instead of essential. Frank E. Gaebelein.

Sermon Outlines *from* PULPIT Readers

The Conqueror from Calvary

Text: Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah?—Isaiah 63:1.

I. Introduction—For ages the Christian church has seen in this sublime vision of the blood-stained conqueror from Edom the prophetic sketch of the sufferings and triumph of Christ on the cross over sin and death, and the final triumph of the Kingdom of God. As we look, then, at this solitary figure—"I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save," who has "trodden the winepress alone"—there are three questions to ask concerning him: Who is he? What has he done? What will he yet do?

II. Body of Sermon—1. Who is he? Some say it makes no difference. But they are wrong. Who is he? First: he is God. "Before Abraham was, I am." "All power is given unto me." Christ claimed the power to judge men, to forgive sin—because he was God. These claims were confirmed by his resurrection, his ascension, his enthronement at the right hand of God. Second he is man. He was born of woman; he experienced hunger, thirst, weariness, sorrow, loneliness, pain, death. Thus was he touched with a feeling of our infirmities. Being God, and also man, Christ was such a one the world had never seen before, and his words and acts have supreme authority and power.

2. What has he done? He conquered for us, on the cross, the power of sin and death. "I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save." How did he save? By suffering and death. He came "with blood-stained garments." Note that all great things are won at the price of suffering and death. In North Africa, Italy, the South Pacific, France, the price is being paid for our freedom. But in his great conquest Christ was alone. "I have trodden the winepress alone." There was "none to help." At his death, the disciples failed him. And at the very last, he said: "My God, why hast Thou forsaken me?" Yes, the lonely Conqueror from Calvary is the only One who is mighty to save. He is mighty to save you? Have you put your reliance in him?

3. What will he yet do, this Conqueror from Calvary? He is the last Conqueror. Before him all other conquerors fade. There are times when we think of the conquest of Christ as applied to each one of us; and there are times when we think of it in relation to the whole universe. That was the way Paul thought of his conquest. And he saw a time when Christ would "reconcile all things unto himself, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven." Let no one imagine that this battle raging today will go on forever. No! It will come to an end, for Christ who met Satan on Calvary will meet him again at the end of the world. History and prophecy tell us of two great conquerors who rode on white horses. One was Napoleon; the other was the one whom John saw at Patmos: "I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse, and he that sat upon him was faithful and true . . . " That other conqueror on a white horse went down—and all other worldly conquerors will go down before him.

III. Conclusion—In the Gallery of Antoine Wiertz at Brussels there are two great paintings. One is entitled "One of Earth's Great Ones." It shows a colossal giant, one of time's conquerors, crushing men's bodies under his feet. The other is called "The Triumph of Christ." On the cross hangs the Conqueror from Calvary, his body beautiful even amid the blood and darkness of Golgotha. From every point of the crown of thorns streams light ineffable. Mighty angels sound trumpets and evil figures flee away in the darkness. So at length shall it be. The Conqueror from Calvary is the last Conqueror. The Light of the World shall banish the world's darkness. Divine Love shall conquer sin and hate.

(Clarence E. Macartney, First Presbyterian Church, Pittsburgh, Pa.)

Toward Better Speech

A Free Forum for the Discussion Of Slips of Speech or Manner

Errors Noted in Passing

my-NOR-i-ty instead of ***mi-NOR-i-ty*** (all short vowels).

in-DUS-try instead of ***IN-dus-try.***

as-CEE-ti-cism instead of ***as-CET-i-cism.***

SU-preme instead of ***su-PREME.***

BUSY-ness (business) instead of ***BIZ-nes.***

IN-trist instead of ***IN-ter-est;*** also IN-trist-ing and in-ter-REST-ing instead of ***IN-ter-est-ing.***

re-con-VER-zhun instead of ***re-con-VER-shun;*** also version has no "z."

Proper Names

Latourette is ***lah-too-RET,*** not LA-too-ret.

Van Dusen is ***van DOO-sen,*** not DEW-sen.

Dulles is as two words: ***DULL-less.***

Tillich is ***TIL-ich,*** not TIL-ik.

How Many Words?

From *In the Minister's Workshop,* by Halford E. Luccock: "How many words will a man speak in the course of a forty-year ministry? Do not guess; figure. Suppose he is not a seventeenth-century Puritan divine, to whom an hour's sermon was merely an abbreviated setting-up exercise. Suppose he is a modern minister who preaches once a Sunday a thirty-minute sermon. Call that 4,500 words, allowing 150 words a minute. Give him a four-week vacation and two Sundays away. That makes 46 times 4,500 words, or 207,000 words a year. Multiply that by 40 years and you get a total of 8,280,000 words. But that is just a starter. Think of the endless other occasions when the minister speaks. . . . Then think how truly terrible it would be, in the sight of God and man, to utter that many words, so many hundred times more than the number in the New Testament, without ever having undergone any arduous discipline to master the way of words—as precision instruments of thought, as a richly filled palette of colors with which pictures can be painted on the mind, as dynamite!" (Abingdon-Cokesbury, 1944.)

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Pressing Forward Toward a Knowledge of God

By William H. Hudnut, Jr.

ONE EVENING a century ago Emerson and Thoreau were sitting in Emerson's library. Thoreau had just been graduated from Harvard, and the talk naturally turned to their mutual alma mater. Emerson remarked that now Harvard College taught all the branches of learning. "Yes," said Thoreau, "all of the branches, but none of the roots."

So, with many of us ministers, the root of the matter is not in our preaching because it is not in our lives; or if indeed it is there it does not go deeply enough. We started out right, and in the early stages of our Christian experience took rapid strides toward God. But then, with all the multiplicity of pastoral cares that soon followed and the oftentimes discouraging routine of ecclesiastical housekeeping, with all the well-laid plans that commenced in committees and continued in campaigns and sometimes concluded in collapse, our spiritual pace slowed down until we are approaching God about as fast as North America is drifting toward Asia, one foot a year. We allowed ourselves to be plunged into what Edith Wharton called the thick of thin things—and they were very thin indeed. We rationalized our disobedience to the heavenly vision, we failed to make time for two-way prayer, and we were no longer grounded in God. We had plenty of branches, but not enough roots.

● *The Necessity of Discipline*

If we would change this situation, and truly become men of God and not just men who know about him, if we would be able honestly to say, "O God, thou art *my* God," then we must grow in at least three ways. For one thing, we must be more disciplined. No minister ever yet climbed the steep hill Difficulty with ease or found closeness to God at the end of a line of least resistance or became a saint in his sleep. The divine companionship always costs; costs in self-control, study (Hugh Black used to say that the professors in his seminary days made the students "kneel down and kiss the foundation stones"), prayer, suffering, and in all the ingenious and undiscouraged exercise of love a man can practice. No inexpensive, arrogant, fact-blinking or reality-shunning variety of Christianity that avoids trouble and evades suffering is genuine. Until a man's religion plumbs the depths it cannot scale the heights. The other day a young wife said as much to her minister when for the first time she faced the fact that her husband was hopelessly ill: "Such a disappointment makes one go deep, when one would rather remain comfortably shallow." Yes, at the very center of all high religion is the inescapable demand, "Discipline thyself."

Certainly Jesus was a long way from teaching a convenient, easy faith! True, his yoke is easy and his burden light after we have assumed them and our spiritual sinews have grown with the carrying; but it takes

William H. Hudnut, Jr.

discipline to stay in the harness. Jesus commonly stressed not the cheapness but the cost of the religious life; he never preached a footless faith that fondled the eternal verities as though they were pleasant but fatuous daydreams. His spiritual precision was not the effortless product of ten easy lessons; it was a deep inner force, nourished on hardship and guided by grace. He proclaimed a faith that rested on the stern realities of life; that put God before family or friends; that demanded a higher fuller type of goodness; that loved enemies, pocketed insults, prayed for its persecutors, forgave injuries, caused dissension, and suffered crucifixions for the sake of its convictions. Such a faith is either magnificent or mad, according to one's point of view, but it certainly is never casual or cheap. No one would dare to call it that.

But professional men of God frequently make it that! Too often our ministerial prayer is not "Lead me to the rock that is higher than I," but "Lead me to some convenient knoll, easy of access, where retreat can be swift and sure." To expect any close companionship with God from such a soft, comfortable faith is about as sensible as to expect the thrills of mountain climbing from walking upstairs while reading an Alpine number of the *Geographic*. We cannot experience great sensation apart from great effort. Like it or not, self-discipline is a basic spiritual law, and we neglect it at our soul's impoverishment. "If any man would come after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross daily, and follow me."

● *Concern for All Kinds of People*

For another thing, if we would live closer to God we must care more for people. Many ministers need to develop, before they can expect to know God very intimately, a far more serious and sacrificial concern about all sorts and conditions of men. Think of the number of people in any community who have no interest in religion; why do we not reach them? We are so careful not to offend anyone or to conflict with any vested interests that often we run the danger of not doing or saying anything. We need to know men better, to be less afraid of them, less timid in our approaches. People need to to cared for and challenged today in a far more incisive way than the ordinary pastoral call provides. Until we ministers of the Truth love people enough to change them we are not loving them enough. Intelligent love of individuals is both a prerequisite to and a result of the divine companionship; the two go together, and where one is weak the other cannot be strong.

In a recent novel there was a cynical, cruel sentence that angered yet rebuked me: "It was Sunday, high noon, and the Presbyterian Church on the corner was giving up its dead." Are we thus spiritually lifeless? Are we failing to bring to people the truth about themselves and their world, failing to produce creative lives among our parishioners because we do not care for them deeply enough? No, this is not altogether true, but it is true enough to hurt; for if our success in bringing in the lost sheep and in building courageous, intelligent and productive Christian witnesses in our own flocks were to be the measure of our spiritual vitality it would not go well with us. We take our shepherding too lightly; our perform-

ance of it is too hasty, our interpretation too shallow. We cannot know God as we should until we turn from the frantic immediacy of much of our lives to the ageless truths of the life of the spirit, and therefore have our souls restored and our love renewed. The only reason the church is more of a field for evangelism than a force for it is that many ministers have lost the art of kindling the Evangel in the lives of men. As we learn to care for them more deeply we will rediscover that art, and thus draw closer to God.

● *Sacrificial Men and the Future*

The future of Christianity, and indeed of the world, will be measured by the number of people who care supremely about what happens to individuals. In the long last the future is always with men of sincere and sacrificial concern who are ready to hazard their lives for love of truth and love of people. The Union was ready to be born when men like Adams, Franklin, Jefferson and Washington began to care deeply enough. Slavery was on its way out when men like Wilberforce, Garrison and Phillips, and women like Harriet Beecher Stowe, began to care deeply enough; when men like Emerson, speaking of the Dred Scott Decision, began to say things like this: 'This filthy enactment was made in the nineteenth century by people who could read and write. I will not obey it, by God!" Had there been enough people who cared that much, fascism and nazism could never have risen to power.

Indeed, the progress of the human race and the changing of it into the human family will always be directly dependent on those who care passionately about what happens to individuals, who identify themselves unreservedly with something large and fine outside of themselves and who give themselves incredibly, foolishly ("the sheer folly of the Christian message!"), to humanity. Such men will know God and live close to him, and will form the spiritual aristocracy that alone will save political democracy. "If we love one another, God abideth in us."

● *No Progress Without True Humility*

Once more, we know God not only as we discipline ourselves and care deeply for others, but also as we are forever dissatisfied with what we are and with what the world is. True humility is the parent of all high achievement; and as we keep a sense of our own inadequacy and unworthiness and develop our sense of dependence on God and indebtedness to him, we will not only know him better but we will serve him better. The highest joy in life lies not in grasping what is within our reach but in reaching for what exceeds our grasp. A minister needs not so much projects he can devour as ideas on which he can feed; unless he is constantly tackling something too big for him he is not living life to the full. Whenever he becomes satisfied with what he can accomplish his complacency will block his companionship with the divine; God needs discontented minds to accomplish his purpose. To know God a man must realize not only how little he is but also how much he is needed. True humility thus has two sides; on the one, a sense of creatureliness and sin; on the other, a sense of courage born of a need greater and a power stronger than self.

No minister should be ashamed at his failure to grow as much as he would like, but only at his fear to launch out and his desire to remain the way he is. No man of God need be ashamed at his failure to be one, but only at his wish to be anything less. No preacher need worry about failing to practice all that he preaches, but only at failing to preach God's full truth. His failure is the very mark of his preaching's authenticity, for if he could fully succeed in practicing his message it would not be worth the preaching. It is in striving after something great, in trying sincerely to approximate it though he may not hope fully to incarnate it, and in being dissatisfied with what he is and with what the world about him is, that a minister truly succeeds. "I count not myself yet to have apprehended, but I press on." If a minister can carry that fine flavor of humility into all his contacts and let it thoroughly irradiate his life, he will be living closer to God than he ever dreams.

Thoughts on Facing a Morning Congregation

By Dwight E. Stevenson

THE organ prelude has called us to worship. The choir has entered and I am in my place, "my" congregation before me. Who are the people gathered here to worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness? Here is a young woman whose heart has just been crushed in a broken love affair. There is a young woman in black; a few weeks ago her fiancé met death in the skies over a foreign land. Scattered all through the congregation are uniforms. Some of these men, I know, have recently returned from danger. One has been through the worst of it on Guadalcanal. There sits a sailor who was in the battle of Midway. Here is one who was at Casablanca.

There is a Japanese-American girl, detailed to the college in our town on special governmental permission; all her family are in internment camp. In the choir there sings a boy who will soon be in a Civilian Public Service camp, for he is a conscientious objector to war. There is a defense worker; and by him a man who refused a lucrative job making guns because of his religious convictions.

Now my eye moves over the parents of boys. This man's son is in Italy right this minute. That man's son is in France. Hawaii, Panama, England. . . . There is anxiety, strain, hunger on those faces.

Here is a family which just this week buried a mother. There a man recalls that just one year ago his wife died; his motherless boys, two of them, sit beside him.

There are college professors, farmers, housewives, students in that congregation. Many I know intimately. Some are strangers.

I am to lead them in worship and I am to preach for them! I think of what I have planned to say. I am glad I have chosen to speak on "Where God Breaks Through into Life," and I am glad there is a cross in that sermon! No lesser theme would be a worthy offering. I shall speak of God and I shall make it clear that I mean the God and father of our Lord Jesus Christ. And I shall preach a Christian gospel; not make a patriotic address with a thin religious veneer, nor give a moral pep talk, nor lapse into "sweet reasonableness." The God of Power will not rise to this demand; nor the God of Life, Order and Beauty. Not even the God of Justice will do; he may encourage us to vindictiveness and self-righteousness. Only the God of the Cross will do. Only he matches the terror and hurt in those hearts before me; only he gives a clue to the judgment of catastrophic events in history; only he speaks forgivingly and redemptively.

I have a congregation before me and I am glad I have chosen to speak of God!

God's Dreams

By Thos. Curtis Clark

"No American poetry of our time has entered more extensively and vitally into the speech and life of the church then that of Thomas Curtis Clark." *(H. E. Luccock)*

$2

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• WHO'S WHO in THIS ISSUE •

FOR MANY YEARS Rev. JOSEPH R. SIZOO was minister of the New York Avenue Presbyterian Church, Washington, D. C., and he now ministers at the Collegiate Church of St. Nicholas, New York. Earlier in his career he was pastor of a number of churches of the Reformed Church in America fellowship. He was minister of the American Church in The Hague during the summer of 1923. Mr. Sizoo was born in Netherlands and received his later education in New Brunswick Theological Seminary and at Columbia University.

For five years Rev. HAROLD A. BOSLEY *was di*rector of religious activities and teacher of philosophy of religion at Iowa State Teachers College. Since 1938 he has ministered at Mount Vernon Place Methodist Church in Baltimore. He was graduated from the Nebraska Wesleyan University and has his B.D. and Ph.D. degrees from the University of Chicago. A new book of his, *The Philosophical Heritage of the Christian Faith,* is soon to be published; it is a worthy successor to his *The Quest for Religious Certainty,* published a few years ago.

Last March Rev. FRED I. CAIRNS *assumed pas*toral duties at the First Parish in Needham, Mass., going to that church from Pilgrim Church (Congregational-Unitarian), El Paso, Texas. In earlier years he was a minister of the Presbyterian Church. He holds degrees from Austin College, Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary and the University of Texas; he also pursued graduate work at the University of Edinburgh.

Rev. JOHN RAY EWERS *has been minister of the* East End Christian Church, Pittsburgh, Pa., for a third of a century. He is a staff correspondent for the *Christian Century* and has been a contributor to the *20th Century Quarterly* since its first issue. Mr. Ewers has been an active member of the Housing Commission of Pittsburgh for a number of years. He has his A.B. from Hiram College, and his B.D. from the University of Chicago.

Having graduated from Elmhurst College and Eden Theological Seminary, Rev. ERNEST F. NOLTE ministered at Nickerson, Kan., and since 1937 has led the activities of the Evangelical Church, Kingfisher, Okla. He is secretary of the Committee on Town and Country Church of the Evangelical and Reformed Church.

In his earlier years a teacher in leading southern preparatory schools and colleges, Rev. TALMAGE C. JOHNSON became minister of the First Baptist Church, Kinston, N. C., about twelve years ago. His later education was received at Furman University, Vanderbilt and Duke.

Rev. EVERETT W. PALMER *is minister of the Cen*tenary Tabernacle Methodist Church, Camden, N. J.

Rev. PETER H. PLEUNE *is minister of the High*land Presbyterian Church, Louisville, Ky.

Rev. WILLIAM H. HUDNUT, JR. *is minister of the* First Presbyterian Church, Springfield, Ill.

Rev. DWIGHT E. STEVENSON *is minister of Beth*any Memorial Church, Bethany, W. Va.

TITLES AND TEXTS

What Pulpit Readers are Preaching About

HOWARD RYDER FOYE, West Presbyterian, Binghamton, N. Y. "What Man Wants Most." Job 23:3—"Oh, that I knew where I might find him!"

ROY C. HELFENSTEIN, First Congregational, Mason City, Ia. "Our Lord's Prayer for a World in Disorder." Matt. 6:10—"Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done."

ROBERT C. FRIEND, Methodist, Contoocook, N. H. "Only Christians Are Free! Gal. 5:1—"Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage."

JAMES C. PERKINS, First Congregational, Niagara Falls, N. Y. "The Power of Affirmative Christianity." 2 Cor. 1:20a—"For he is the Yes to all the undertakings of God." (N. T. in Basic English)

JACK B. MCMICHAEL, First Presbyterian, Vicksburg, Miss. "Where the Cross Crosses Life." Rom. 2:4b—"The goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance."

ROBERT E. COPE, University Friends Church, Wichita, Kan. "A Great Inheritance." 1 Cor. 3:21b—"For all things are yours."

JOE R. KENNEDY, First Christian, Pine Bluff, Ark. "Mastering Fear." 2 Tim. 1:6,7—"Wherefore I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee. . . . For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind."

EDWARD A. MAYER, Unity Evangelical and Reformed, Antigo, Wis. "Bombproof Shelters." Psalm 27:5—"In the time of trouble he shall hide me in his pavilion." Psalm 91:1—"He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty."

WILLARD A. KRATZ, Salem Evangelical and Reformed, Catasauqua, Pa. "The Inevitable Rewards." Rom. 6:23—"For sin's wages are death; but God's free gift is eternal life." (Weymouth)

FOR YOUR SERMON AND TEXT

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Title of sermon

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Text used (write out the text)

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Name of minister

.....
Name of church

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Address

The Editor's Page

The Event of the Month

THE attempted assassination of Adolf Hitler by a conspiracy of his generals and high military officers has been taken by the world as the first indication that German morale is beginning to crack. That it is only the beginning was made clear by the ruthless effectiveness with which it was met by the führer. At least sixteen generals were promptly hung and it is claimed in some reports that as many as one hundred military officers have been "liquidated." The conspiracy must have been far more extensive than is indicated by the penalties already reported. The führer, however, is still in the driver's seat. But the possibility of a general mutiny has been greatly enhanced by the attack on his life. Meanwhile, with the Allied and Russian forces making sensational gains and with the opening of a new front in southern France, the crack in German morale may safely be expected to widen into an effective revolutionary uprising. The end of the European war would seem to be not far distant, and it is reasonable to hope that the resulting concentration upon the Pacific war will bring it also to an end, perhaps in 1945. Then will loom before us the prodigious tasks of demobilization, reconversion of industry, relief and reconstruction of the occupied countries and China, settlement of the fate of Germany and Japan, the discovery of a *modus vivendi* with Russia and the projecting of a stable and peaceful world order. Did ever a generation face so vast and precarious a prospect?

First Crack in German Morale

The Book of the Month

IN THE MINISTER'S WORKSHOP. *By Halford E. Luccock. Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, $2.00.*

A BOOK by Professor Luccock needs no commendation to secure for it a wide reading by ministers. It needs only to be announced! No writer on the art of preaching has made so great a place in the esteem of his fellow preachers as has the professor of homiletics in Yale Divinity School. It is his genius to be a kindler of sermons in other preachers' minds. Note my word "kindler." He doesn't *give* you a sermon—he just points you to the spot where you can find one! And he opens your eyes to see it and kindles your imagination to lay hold of it in such a way that it is not his sermon but your very own. More than this, he creates in you the habit of doing this for yourself, without any help from him. Thus he is a true teacher. Who of us is not deeply indebted to Luccock's amazing homiletical fecundity? His books on "preaching values in the new translations" and on the Acts of the Apostles have set little bushes aglow with a divine flame on every page of the Bible. This new book deals with the art of preaching more than with the content of sermons. But Luccock cannot discuss method without throwing off brilliant sparks which kindle more sermons. His "minister's workshop" is a forge with a fire in it and an anvil on which not only are sermons hammered into effective instruments of the Christian message, but the preacher himself has the crooks and kinks taken out of him. Get this new book of Luccock's and you will get wisdom!

A Thought for the Month

DURING the past ten or fifteen years there has been a marked decrease on the part of Christian thinkers and writers in the use of the word "religion" and a corresponding increase in the use of the word "Christianity." This, I believe, is symptomatic of a radical shift of interest from religion in general to the specific claims of the Christian faith. Looking back, I observe that the same change has taken place in my own writing. Whereas I, too, used to think and write more about religion, I now think and write more about Christianity—its faith, its lore (including, pre-eminently, the Bible), its living community called the church, and especially that cluster or span of historical events centering in Jesus Christ in which Christianity emerged. This change is significant. It means that the specifically *Christian* mind is reawakening, that it is coming to itself. Like the prodigal, it has been in a far country, wasting its heritage in loose thinking. It forgot Christianity, and took up with religion. But it has at last discovered that religion in general is nothing but an abstraction, that actual religion is always a specific religion, that a religion can be false or true, good or bad, even demonic. To say that a man is "religious" is to say nothing specific about him, for all men are religious. Paul told the Athenians that they were "very religious," and proceeded at once to preach the Christian gospel to them. Christianity cannot be reduced to religion in general. I almost wish we could quit thinking of it as a religion, even though we contrast it favorably with "other religions." For Christianity not only stands over against other "religions," but over against every philosophical or scientific or humanistic or purely ethical view of reality and of life. It is the revelation of the nature of reality and of the meaning of life. To be a Christian, therefore, is not just to be religious; it is to share vitally in the fellowship of the specific historical community which carries the specific Christian faith—a faith which lays hold upon the wisdom and power of God revealed in Jesus Christ.

Religion or Christianity

Charles Clayton Morrison

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